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DEPARTMENT FOR SRAP HOLBROOKE FROM AMBASSADOR EIKENBERRY

E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/14/2029
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [KJUS](#) [AF](#)
SUBJECT: ANTI-CORRUPTION STRATEGY APPROVAL

Classified By: Deputy Ambassador Francis J. Ricciardone for reasons
1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (U) Corruption in government may be the greatest obstacle the Afghan government faces in its quest for legitimacy in the eyes of the Afghan people. Corruption directly and indirectly feeds the insurgency.

¶2. (C) Mission, SRAP and other Washington staff have worked hard to develop a good overarching anti-corruption strategy. We are transmitting what we hope will be the final version of that strategy via email. But we must recognize that our strategy explicitly depends on the Afghan government's will and ability to lead this effort to fix itself. Convincing Afghan government leaders to take on this role is our diplomatic and development challenge. Success will require significant U.S. and international human and monetary resources, increased information collection, and changes in the way international entities -- including U.S. intelligence and military entities -- do business in Afghanistan.

¶3. (C) I want to flag a particular program and policy issue in our strategy. I am not convinced that the High Office of Oversight (HOO) needs to be dismantled and replaced by a new independent international anti-corruption or oversight commission. We will separately communicate our analysis of the pros and cons of two alternative courses of action: keeping but strengthening the HOO, including by making it more independent; versus dismantling and replacing the HOO. Adopting the first option does not preclude gradual evolution toward the second.

¶4. (SBU) I commend the excellent staff work on this complex issue and important program, and ask your timely approval of our anti-corruption strategy, as transmitted to you separately.

EIKENBERRY